

Appl. No. 10/727,740
Reply to Office action of 01/05/2005

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application in view of the above amendment, and of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-21 and 27 are pending in this case. Claim 18 is amended herein and claims 22-24 are cancelled herein. Claim 27 is added herein.

The Examiner objected to the disclosure. The Specification has been amended in update the status of the parent case as requested.

The Examiner objected to claims 22-24 as being of improper dependent form. Claims 22-24 are cancelled.

The Examiner rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 18 is amended to replace "ones" with "wafers" for proper antecedent basis. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the rejection now be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Reyes et al. (U.S. Patent 6,599,763).

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 18 is unanticipated by Reyes et al as there is no disclosure or suggestion in the reference of transporting individual wafers of a lot within a processing tool with multiple processing chambers, among the chambers and wafer cassette and/or staging locations in various different sequences. Reyes teaches a process in which wafers are taken from a cassette and processed, then removed from the tool and placed back in the cassette according to a random slot sequence. While the tool itself may have multiple chambers, Reyes teaches these chambers as each performing

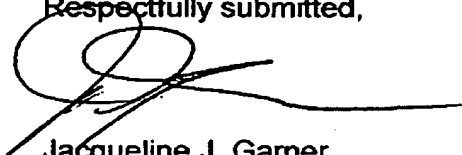
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different subprocesses (e.g., metrology, etching, wafer coating, etc.). The randomization is not taught as being among the chambers as claimed but rather a random slot sequence for placing the wafers back into a different slot number of the cassette. Reyes does not disclose or suggest transporting wafers within a processing tool among multiple chambers (and the cassette and/or staging locations) in various different sequences. The only different "sequence" taught in Reyes is the location in the cassette for a wafer rather than a various transporting sequences among multiple chambers, the cassette, and/or staging locations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 18 and the claims dependent thereon are unanticipated by Reyes.

The Lin et al, Rohner, and Shin et al references cited by the Examiner have been reviewed, but are not felt to come within the scope of the claims as amended. The instant application is a divisional of the Kahn reference. The Kahn reference is not a proper prior art reference.

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the Examiner's rejections and allowance of claims 18-21 and 27. If the Examiner has any questions or other correspondence regarding this application, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact Applicant's attorney at the below listed telephone number and address.

Respectfully submitted,



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